

BEAR TRACKS

USCGC BEAR NEWSLETTER

Written by BEAR Sailors for Bear Sailors, Family and Friends
Edited by LTJG Chris Bodner and ENS Michael Rauch

Who We Are

After completing an extensive post-fire dockside, BEAR was tested time and time again as her crew battled through countless inspections and evaluations, including Tailored Ship's Training Availability (TSTA). This crew is resilient and adapts to adversity as we strive for excellence. Essentially starting again from scratch, BEAR and her crew bounced back with the dedication and work ethic to "Restore the Roar!" BEAR is first of the Famous class, second to none, and this 31 year old girl is back in the hunt!

JIATF-South Patrol



The BEAR crew is just finishing up another successful patrol in the Caribbean! From patrolling established drug trafficking corridors to saving lives at sea, our shipmates have been working around the clock over the last 43 days to perform the vital missions of the U.S. Coast Guard. To provide a snapshot, BEAR sailors safely traveled over 6,000 miles, provided over 50 hours of air coverage via an embarked helicopter, rescued five Cuban migrants who would have otherwise perished at sea, obtained valuable intelligence by boarding a vessel suspected of smuggling contraband, provided engineering assistance to a disabled foreign fishing vessel at the request of the host nation, and worked with partner nations in support of combating illicit maritime activity, among many other things. All departments, including Deck, Engineering, Operations, and Support, worked seamlessly together in support of the mission and each other. Mid-patrol, for a bit of rest and relaxation, the crew experienced the exotic country of Panama, twice, and enjoyed activities such as zip lining through a rainforest, viewing jungle wildlife, and surfing. Showing intensive focus and dedication to mission readiness, the crew continued to train and improve up through the final days, as showcased by the cutter's first successful 76MM air gunnery exercise in over 2 years. The crew of the Great Cutter BEAR is doing what it takes to keep our country safe!

Semper Paratus!

Welcome aboard SN Barefield

Fair Winds SN Higbee, FN
Kessler, and SN Boyd

Sailor of the Quarter: SN Dylan Boyd



Congratulations to SN Boyd on receiving Sailor of the Quarter. He is the Deck Force Leading Seaman and is departing to AMT "A" School in March.

Sailor of the Year: IT2 Christopher Silva



Congratulations to IT2 Silva for his dedication to the information systems infrastructure, keeping BEAR online!



FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER

As we return from patrol, I am happy to report BEAR hit full stride participating in a Joint Interagency Task Force Operation combating the flow of illicit trafficking throughout the Caribbean. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of the BEAR crew during our time in theater over 16,000 pounds of contraband valued at nearly \$150 million dollars was disrupted and will not reach U.S. shores. In addition, the lives of five Cuban migrants were saved due to the unending efforts of this crew.

We could have not accomplished any of this without the loving support of our families and friends! BEAR's Motto "Summa Potentia Per Facilitatem" means Greatest Strength Through Versatility. Throughout the patrol, I remained thankful as BEAR sailors embraced our motto by challenging themselves and each other to continue to grow and pursue new qualifications enabling ultimate mission flexibility. We are forever indebted to our families for their unending love and support enabling our focus to do so!!

I want to also take time to thank all those that had a hand in the publishing of 'BEAR Tracks.' Oftentimes what is routine to us at sea makes for a great sea story, but all too often gets lost as the days of sea duty wear on. I have high hopes that this inaugural 'BEAR Tracks' will become a longstanding tradition for BEAR and look forward to the many sea stories we capture over the patrols to come!

With My Sincerest Gratitude and Appreciation, CDR D. W. Ramassini



Pictured Above: The two First in Class Medium Endurance Cutters with a combined eighty years of commissioned service. The 210' CGC RELIANCE (WMEC 615) is approaching her 50th year in commission while 270' CGC BEAR (WMEC 901) is into our fourth decade of service.

OUR NEWEST PERMANENT CUTTERMEN



MK2 Fleming, DC2 Noftz, MK3 Williams, and ME1 Heisler (not pictured)

TODAY'S TOP STORY

In the Straits of Florida- Look, in the sky! It's a bird, it's a plane, it's... SN Harrison?! That's right; SN Trey Harrison of Louisville, Kentucky departed from his normal role of keeping BEAR's decks in ship shape, and took to the sky with the crew of HITRON Jacksonville's Coast Guard Helicopter MH6504 this afternoon. But this was no ordinary flight, SN Harrison (recently advanced from Seaman Apprentice) was rewarded for his taut watchstanding aboard BEAR earlier this morning when he sighted a small raft containing five migrants who were later rescued by BEAR's crew and transferred to CGC NANTUCKET for disposition. In what ended up being a very busy day for BEAR's entire crew, between flight operations and migrant operations, this proved to be a definite morale booster for the young BEAR sailor. In what turned out to be no ordinary coincidence, SN Harrison is also an aspiring Aviation Survival Technician. When asked what he thought of the flight he said "It was the highlight of my short Coast Guard career".

We wish SN Harrison the best of luck pursuing his aviation dreams remaining well grounded in seamanaship of course!!

Written by: BM3 Ryan Langlois



QUALIFICATIONS

Underway Officer of the Deck (OOD)

ENS Michael Rauch

Quartermaster of the Watch (QMOW)

SNBM Domenic Keenan
ME3 Christopher McAbee
BM3 Steven Horton
SN Amanda Brandt



Anchor Watch

OS1 Rebecca Murray
OS1 Paula Verden
OS2 Michael Lucci

Helm and Lookout

SN Marquis Barefield
SN Kenneth Hawkins
SNSK Anita Jones

Boatswain's Mate of the Watch (BMOW)

BM3 Ryan Langlois
SN Christopher Bowman
SN Christopher Conkey
SN Kyle Smith

CIC Supervisor

OS1 Rebecca Murray

CIC Watchstander

ME1 Daniel Heisler
ET3 Nicholas Jolicoeur

Underway Engineer of the Watch (EOW)

ENS Andrew Bratman
MKC Michael Rawlings
MKC Michael Allen
EM1 Nicholas Colletti
MK1 Landon Carter

Inport Engineer of the Watch (EOW)

MKC Michael Allen

Underway Auxiliary Watchstander

FN Ismael Hidalgo Fernandez

Inport Security Watchstander

FN Ismael Hidalgo Fernandez

Basic Damage Control

FN Carlos Rodriguez
MKC Michael Allen

Advanced Damage Control

ENS Michael Rauch
MKC Michael Allen
GM1 Forest Gladman
ME1 Daniel Heisler
IT1 Daniel Bryce
ME3 Christopher McAbee

Fuel, Oil, and Water King (FOWK)

MK3 Richard Williams

Helicopter Control Officer (HCO)

ET1 William Coffey

Landing Signal Officer (LSO)

GM1 Forest Gladman
SK1 Shawna Weschrek
EM1 Nicholas Colletti

Flight Deck On Scene Leader (OSL)

ENS Andrew Bratman

Helicopter Tie Down Crewmember

BM3 Ryan Langlois
ET3 Nicholas Jolicoeur
IT3 Richard Caruso
DC2 Zachary Noftz
FN Charles Holtzapfel

Anti-Terrorism Force Protection Sentry

SN Christopher Bowman
SN Matthew Higbee
SN Alberto Vidal
SN Austin Provoyeur
SN Kyle Smith

Boarding Team Member

ME3 Christopher McAbee
SN Matthew Higbee



HARD WORK PAYS OFF

Cutter Rescue Swimmer

SN Austin Provoyeur
SN Trey Harrison

Flight Deck Fire Party Team Member

ENS Andrew Bratman
DC1 Lucas Mangold
DC2 James Ruble
ET3 Nicholas Jolicoeur
ET3 Justin Resseguie
IT3 Richard Caruso
SN Nicholas Stewart
SN Kyle Smith
SN Matthew Higbee
SN Christopher Bowman
SN Alberto Vidal
FN Christopher Levitsky
SN Austin Provoyeur
SN Trey Harrison

Flight Deck Fueling Team

MK1 Landon Carter
MK3 Michael Tanner
FNMK Paul Lawrence

Boat Davit Winch Operator

MK3 Michael Tanner

Small Boat Coxswain

SNBM Domenic Keenan

Gunnery Excellence



ADVANCEMENTS:

*Jeremy Mohler to IS2
Trey Harrison to SN
Caryn Aiello to IS1
Paula Verden to OS1
Zachary Noftz to DC2*



AWARDS:



Permanent Cutterman Pins:

*ME1 Heisler
MK2 Fleming
DC2 Noftz
MK3 Williams*



Sea Service Ribbons:

*IT1 Bryce
ET3 Jolicoeur
EM3 Jones
SNBM Keenan*



Letters of Commendation:

*IT2 Silva
IT3 Caruso
SN Boyd*



Temporary Cutterman Pins:

*ENS Rauch
SK1 Weschrek
OS1 Verden
EM3 Burns
SN Provoyeur
SN Harrison
SN Brandt
SN Bailey*



Good Conduct Ribbons:

*MK1 Carter
BM2 Delconte
EM2 Kees
BM2 Stocker
BM3 Langlois
ET3 Ploski
BM3 Pontecorvo
SNSK Jones
SN Boyd*



ABOUT A SHIPMATE

The Bear Maximum

The Tale of a Salty Sailor

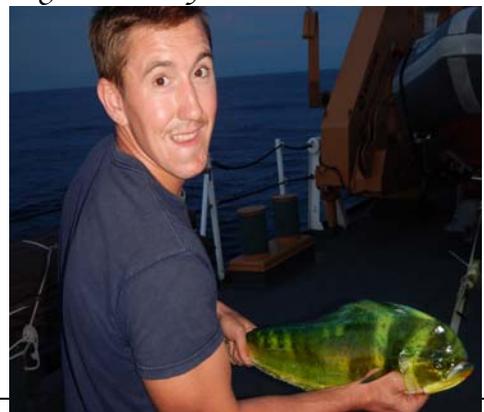
Written by BM3 Pontecorvo

Keeping up with the maintenance of a ship whose keel was laid over 30 years ago is no easy task. The engineering department's endless hard work and dedication to their craft is truly something to admire onboard United States Coast Guard Cutter Bear (WMEC-901). However, no matter how many preventative measures you take, things could go wrong when on the high seas. Fireman (FN) Chad "The Kid" Holtzapfel knows these facts all too well. As a member of the Main Propulsion division onboard, he constantly finds himself turning wrenches, cleaning bilges, and keeping the machinery running.

On a dark night underway in the Western Caribbean the unexpected happened. A lube oil spinner in the engine room exploded. Flammable oil was sprayed all over the 100 plus degree engine room. Holtzapfel, who was on watch at the time, went into action. As Bear set General Emergency, Chad courageously ran into the engine room to take initial action. First, he secured the machinery affected by the casualty. Next with the help of fellow engineers, he grabbed the closest Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) fire extinguisher and blanketed the oil as a fire preventive measure. FN Holtzapfel and his team's flawless execution of initial action was a direct representation of the training he had received on Bear. The 2 valiant acts performed prevented what could have been a deadly main space fire.

Just a mere two nights later the Bear was enjoying a much deserved port call at anchor in Bocas Del Toro, Panama. With the majority of the crew out on liberty, it was the duty sections job to keep the ship safe. Shortly after 2300 the alarm sounded in ECC. FN Holtzapfel once again on watch and on his game is sent out to investigate. Upon entering AUX 2 he sees the 900 gallon per minute Auxiliary Salt Water pump shooting water like the geysers of Yellow Stone. With no hesitation of fear Chad's training kicks in again. He rips off his sweatshirt and runs to cover the ruptured pipe. He is able to effectively slow the rate of water that is filling the bilges of the space. Help arrives in the form of plugs and patches. Shortly after general emergency is set, the flooding is contained thanks to the outstanding response from the young Fireman and the support of a stellar duty section. Bear once again is spared from the depths of Poseidon.

A salty sailor like FN Chad Holtzapfel will not boast his heroism and bravery. Instead, he gives credit to the outstanding engineering team that has made him the top notch performer he is. The training he has been given in his short career has proven to be vital to keeping Bear ever able and ready to carry out what ever challenges she will face.



ALL IN A DAY'S WORK...



ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

The patrol began with a brief port call in Mayport, FL to ring in the New Year. BEAR moored up outboard of the USS De Wert and celebrated 2014 by getting underway early in the morning. BEAR experienced the first engineering related casualty in Mayport while performing Small Boat Ops. With both the RHI and the OTH going down, A-Gang performed a quick overhaul and had both units operational by morning. Thanks to **MKC Rawlings**, **MK1 Carter**, **MK2 Fleming**, **MK3 Tanner**, **FNMK Lawrence**, and **FN Kleinschrodt**, the units will return to the Portsmouth Boat-Pool in better shape than received. Not only were the Small Boats and Davit giving operational issues to the Auxiliary Division, but the all important fins that keep the 270 feet of BEAR from rocking to extreme angles were not installed prior to leaving the pier in Portsmouth. Thanks to our goal orientated engineers from A-Gang and assistance from the DC shop, BEAR was able to have both fins fully functional by our entrance into the operational area.



Engineers onboard BEAR were exemplary in showing the highest level of stamina and fitness throughout the 42 day patrol. Several engineers were unable to make the patrol with us due to limited rack space for our deployed units. With only 2 qualified boat engineers **MK2 Rhodenhizer** and **MK2 Fleming** traded off the position regularly. Flight Quarters was another regular event that our engineers were required to stand. Our two Helo Deck Fire Teams were made up of **DC2 Noftz** (while he wasn't acting tiedown) **MK3 Williams**, **EM3 Jones**, **FN Kessler**, **FN Holtzapfel**, **FN Nicoleau** and **FN Maisonave**. Our acting Rescuemen were **DC2 Ruble** and **DC3 Bosley**. Even **EM1 Colletti** got up on the flight deck as a qualified Landing Signal Officer (Yeah we trusted him to land those HH-65's overtop the Messdeck). **EM3 Burns** was kept busy maintaining all required Helo-landing lights and keeping those Aviators from moving the hangar

door. When the watches were not interrupted by double flight operation BEAR Engineers were standing the normal engine room watches with newly reported **FN Hidalgo-Fernandez**, **FN Rodriquez-Felix**, and **FN Levitsky** breaking in Auxiliary Watchstander when they weren't up early completing Boat Checks or JP-5 Testing with the rest of the Auxiliary Division.



60,000 gallons of Fuel Oil were successfully transferred to BEAR in Charqui Grande, Panama. Newly qualified Fuel Oil and Water King (FOWK) **MK3 Williams**, along with **MKC Shores**, **MK2 Rhodenhizer**, and **MK3 Knight** were instrumental in the transfer with fuel on load rates of over 250 gpm. The other fueling team members were **EM3 Jones**, **DC3 Bosley**, **FN Kessler**, **FN Holtzapfel**, **FN Maisonave**, **FN Nicoleau**, **FN Hidalgo-Fernandez**, and **FN Rodriquez-Felix**.

The electrical shop onboard BEAR were able to relax shortly in between intermittent Pitch Control Faults and Fire Alarms when dropping the anchor. Under the watchful eye of **EMC McDougall** and the knowledgeable right hands from **EM1 Colletti**, **EM2 Kees**, **EM3 Burns**, and **EM3 Jones** all issues with the MPCMS console were identified. The Sound Powered Phones that had given the Division difficulty and took over 40 man hours to complete all performed without incident. Communications during casualties were some of the clearest since pre-fire BEAR.

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT (CONT.)

BEAR's patrol would not be complete without the General Emergency alarm in the dark of night. Shortly after midnight BEAR experienced a Major Lube Oil Leak on the Generator Lube Oil Purifier. All hands manned there billets, but thanks to the determination and wherewithal of the Main Prop Division including **MKC Allen, MKC Shores, MK2 Rhodenhizer, MK3 Knight, MK3 Williams, FN Kessler, FN Holtzapfel, FN Nicoleau, and FN Maisonave**. The 100+ gallons of Lube Oil that covered the engine room took less than 3 hours to clean up and had everyone back in the rack so that a safe entrance to Panama could be conducted later that afternoon. At the end of the port call **EM2 Kees** spotted a rising bilge level alarm caused by a rupture to the Auxiliary Salt Water supply. Again General Emergency was set and the duty section responded to plugging and dewatering of the Auxiliary Machine Space. **FN Holtzapfel** showed great initiative and attacked the casualty by attempting to decrease the water pressure by using his body weight.



The salty wind and heavy seas of the patrol were all around BEAR as **MK2 Fleming, DC2 Noftz, and MK3 Williams** were welcomed as Permanent Cutterman to the long blue line during this patrol. 15 years of sea service were recognized by all the Permanent Cutterman aboard BEAR as they greeted their new shipmates into the exclusive ranks. It was visible how much sacrifice and knowledge were represented by all present and it was not taken for granted that the recognized individuals were engineers representing each shop onboard. The bells rang once for each 3 years of sea service. Once all hands with Cutterman Pins had congratulated the new members and rang their respective bells the total count of the bell was over 30.



BEAR enjoyed the port call of Bocas Del Toro, Panama, but due to a need to offload oily waste, the overall three day visit was cut by a day to facilitate the transit south to offload waste. Morale was kept high throughout the patrol by the Morale Committee's Saturday Night Games and Sunday morning events. The morale shoot was a favorite even if averages were in the 50% hit rate. Again, BEAR enjoyed a second port call to Bocas Del Toro when plans to keep BEAR in the operational area longer were explicated and Honduras was scratched off the list. But all was for naught when BEAR was recalled one day early to set sail and avoid weather that was at operational limits. With all members present aboard, BEAR took to the sea and the transit north with visions of home.

Home almost seemed too far away when BEAR unexpectedly came upon a five man Cuban vessel transiting North in the Florida Straits approximately 30 miles south of Key West. **DC2 Ruble, DC2 Noftz, and DC3 Bosley** made sure the shower and heads were set up for the migrants as we processed them prior to transferring them off to USCGC NANTUCKET. Safety and Escorts for the migrants were **MK2 Fleming, EM2 Kees, EM3 Burns, MK3 Williams, EM3 Jones, FN Maisonave, and FN Holtzapfel**. The migrants were cooperative and were cared for without event. Thanks to the hard work of each engineer the migrants will be repatriated to Cuba.

OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

Led by **LT Dan Bell**, **LTJG Chris Bodner**, **ENS Justin Maio**, and **ENS Michael Rauch**, the Operations Department continues to lead the charge in all operational endeavors. As we near the end of our patrol, we look back at the challenges we faced and accomplishments we achieved with pride. These include having conducted over 80 Shipboard Helicopter evolutions (resulting in 50+ hours of flight time) and safely navigated over 6,000 nautical miles, all for the purpose of combating illicit maritime activities on the high seas.

Our Navigation Boatswain's Mates (BMs) have become experts at adapting to the daily changes in our schedule, port calls, and transit plans. **BM1 James Ballard**, **BM2 Meredith Stocker**, **BM3 Seth Pontecorvo**, and **BM3 Steven Horton** work tirelessly to ensure we have safe routes, keeping the ship well clear of all navigational hazards. When they are not preparing and correcting charts the NAV BMs are leading the front lines as Coxswains, Boatcrew, and Boarding Team Members responding to all Targets of Interest.



Our Maritime Law Enforcement Specialists (**ME1 Daniel Heisler** and **ME3 Christopher McAbee**) combined forces with members of the Pacific Tactical Law Enforcement Team (**ME2 Matthew Rincon** and **ME3 Elliot Felix**) to conduct and document multiple boardings of vessels in the fight to stop illicit trafficking of narcotics and illegal immigration. Together, they conducted numerous hours of law enforcement training, enabling the qualification of two Boarding Team Members and five shipmates in Anti-Terrorism/Force Protection Sentry positions and helping a number of others make significant progress on their qualifications.

The Electronics Division, led by **ENS Rauch** and **ETC Alfonso Mejia**, is designated with the overall maintenance and operation of all shipboard electronics. The shop consists of **ET1 William Coffey**, **ET1 Joseph Schubert**, **IT1 Daniel Bryce**, **ET2 Joseph Fitzgerald**, **ET2 Jeremy Moore**, **IT2 Christopher Silva**, **ET3 Michael Ploski**, **ET3 Justin Resseguie**, **ET3 Nicholas Jolicoeur**, and **IT3 Richard Caruso**. These crafty technicians respond to electronic casualties and keep the ship's important systems infrastructure up and running like clockwork. The shop recently went through a major overhaul of new equipment prior to the patrol to help improve connectivity and safety of navigation; they adapted to the new system and kept it running on its maiden voyage. Coined as "Entertainment Technicians," they also dedicate their time to making sure we can watch NFL games to keep us sane; most notably, the Superbowl. Two of our members, **IT2 Silva** and **IT3 Caruso**, both received Letters of Commendation for their outstanding work for their dedication to the information systems infrastructure and **IT2** was awarded Sailor of the Year!

The Gunner's Mates (**GM1 Forrest Gladman**, **GM2 Christopher Thompson**, and **GM3 Chad Atwood**) have ensured all firearms are in good working order and ready to defend our crewmembers. From providing training to our law enforcement personnel to sinking hazards to navigation with our crew-served machine guns (**GM3** is quite the marksman on the .50 call!); they demonstrate time and again their excellence in all things that go boom.

As a team, the Operations department and BEAR are completing the mission we set sail to do and are continuing to save lives at sea and keep drugs off the streets of the United States of America.



SUPPORT DEPARTMENT



The Support Department has been very busy this patrol getting our house in good working order. The Storekeepers started out the patrol by doing a full Wall-To-Wall inspection down in Lower-Lower Stores on over 13,000 line items. This enabled us to identify many parts that were no longer necessary to carry aboard the cutter and set us up to be able to completely re-organize the storage space. Allowing us eventually bring all AMIO materials down from the O3 Deck and AFT Stores creating more workspace for other departments. The SK's worked diligently and quickly when there was emergency oily waste offloads needed and when schedules changed last minute moving port calls around. We are continually striving to grow as a department and help our fellow shipmates by becoming more versatile to the crew. This patrol FSC Shipley started her HCO qualifications. SK1 Weschrek became an LSO and started working on her Helm and Lookout and QMOW qualifications. SK2 Morgan reached Permanent Cutterman status and SNSK Jones became Helm and Lookout qualified. YN2 Lockard walked in last minute under TAD orders when YN1 Colon couldn't make the patrol. He quickly took charge of the files helping many crew members who were transferring out by getting their orders ready and helping them with PCS departing worksheets. He also handled numerous awards ceremonies to include a Permanent Cutterman's Ceremony. He discovered a \$3,000 pay discrepancy with one of our crew members and also fixed many award discrepancies in Direct Access. YN2 Lockard also stepped in during drills as plotter and phone talker having no previous experience in these roles. The cooks were very flexible this patrol dealing with multiple flight evolutions working diligently to insure no crew member was unfed. They also had to deal with extended nighttime operations and insured that there were plenty of midrats to go around as well as plenty of in-between snacks.

It's 5 o'clock and all is still except for the few watch-standers, the cook and mess cooks awakening from their slumber. The cook crawls out of his rack and is greeted by a cold galley waiting to be used while the

mess cooks start up the scullery and clean the crumbs of long forgotten peanut butter and jelly sandwiches from the tables. The cook fires up the ovens, turns on the griddle, and breaks out the eggs and bacon. An hour goes by, and before the crew lays a wonderful spread of breakfast goodness. One by one the line lengthens as all those awake surround the counter to watch FS2 Chandler make his world class omelets! In the midst of breakfast FS3 Meyers must begin his preps for lunch and dinner just in case a drill or casualty decides to interrupt! Lunch is phenomenal as usual, with such delights as Asian chicken and cold cuts! Before you know it lunch is secure and dinner rolls around with yet another amazing meal set before the crew. Finally, to end the day Chef FS2 Ocariz slaves over a hot griddle to produce breakfast sandwiches, leftovers, and cheesy quesadillas! Semper Paratus with spatula in hand, come flight quarters, drill, or heavy rolls FS3 Meyers, FS2 Chandler, and FS2 Ocariz stand at the ready to face, overcome, and laugh at any obstacle in their way! With FS1 cracking the whip during her 24 hour workday and FSC taking the heat for food failing to do what it's supposed to do, they are unstoppable! These salty sailors can cook with the best of 'um! Stay tuned for our beef stroganoff and California blend vegetable recipes!

With most all of the FS and mess cook staff having a billet for all drills and ship evolutions and serving roughly 15000 individual meals use \$72 k of food. I just want to say thank you for all of the hard work and dedication that is shown. Through all of it there has been a hot meal waiting and a smiling face waiting to serve.



DECK DEPARTMENT

For our January patrol Deck Force welcomes BMC Johnson (TAD for the patrol), and our newest shipmate SN Barefield, arriving out of Basic Training eager to cut through the seven seas! SN Barefield and his wife Ashley are relocating from St. Petersburg, FL. Welcome aboard shipmates!



As usual, Deck leads the way setting the bar high among departments aboard BEAR. Through endless swells and rolling seas we honed our skills and perfected our evolutions through “on-the-job training”.



After 43 days at sea, Deck Force took the term “versatility” to the next level by training and qualifying 24 of our department members. From the newest qualified Coxswain, SNBM Keenan, to the newest helm and lookout watch standers, we have done it all. New qualifications include: 2 cutter swimmers: SN Harrison, and SN Provoyeur; 2 helm and lookout watch standers: SN Barefield and SN Hawkins, 5 AFTP watch standers: SN Bowman, SN Smith, SN Vidal, SN Provoyeur, and SN Higbee; 3 BMOW and boat deck captain’s: BM3 Langlois, SN Conkey and SN Smith; 1 Helo Tie Down BM3 Langlois and SNBM Keenan also completed his QMOW qualifications.

Our ears rang night & day with “Now set the small boat launch and recovery detail” as we improved our proficiency and safety practices during these evolutions. Deck Force performed several small boat operations, mooring, and anchoring details, emergency drills and hundreds of helicopter landings during this patrol.

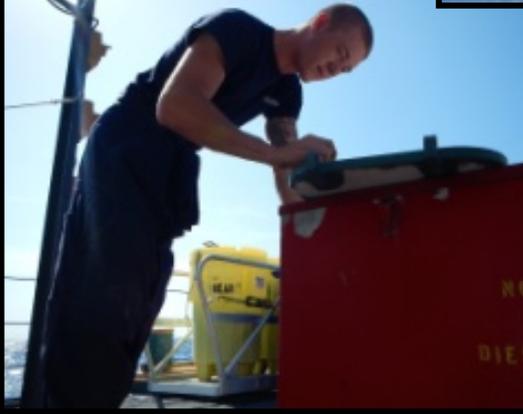
After performing humanitarian assistance recovering 5 migrants, honing our sharp shooting skills participating in a morale gun shoot, anchoring atop an ocean volcano, and declaring SN Harrison as our newest member of the “MK I MOD I eagle eyeball club”, we are making way to Portsmouth.

We are ready for some much needed rest, relaxation, and reconnection with our families. We are also preparing for the departure of two very important and deserving shipmates SN Boyd and SN Higbee. SN Boyd earned “Sailor of The Quarter” and is on his way to AMT “A” school in Elizabeth City, NC. We wish SN Higbee the best of luck as he travels out west to Petaluma, California to attend ET “A” school.

Shipmates & Family Members- the sacrifices we make while being away from one another build character, strength, & wisdom. We want you to know that you are not forgotten. Your job at home is just as important as what we do out on the high seas. You’re missed when we’re out here, we share stories of home to pass the time, and lend an ear to one another when we struggle. Thank you for your support, our mooring lines will hit home port soon!



DECK DEPARTMENT (CONT.)



HITRON AVIATION DETACHMENT

14-09

Greetings from the HITRON 14-09 aviation detachment aboard the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Bear!



For those of you who do not know what a HITRON aviation detachment is I will give you a little back story about our unit and a little bit about what our purpose is when we deploy to a cutter. First off, HITRON stands for Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron. Our unit was formally commissioned in 1998 and is based out of Cecil Field in Jacksonville, Florida. Our sole mission is AUF, or Airborne Use of Force, which is directly tied into drug interdiction missions. Until 2008, we flew Agusta MH-68A Stingray helicopters, currently we fly MH-65D Dolphin helicopters specifically equipped and outfitted for the AUF mission. We travel as a six man team consisting of two pilots, one precision marksman/aerial gunner and three specialized aircraft maintainers. We remain with the cutter throughout its entire patrol, assisting with surveillance and the actual disabling of go-fast type vessels suspected in the smuggling of drugs.

Teamwork and communication between the cutter, small boat crews and the helicopter is critical during every evolution to make sure the job gets done effectively and safely. As of December 2013 HITRON aviation detachments have interdicted over 270 vessels and seized over \$11 billion in drugs and cash. So as you can imagine the training, whether it is the cutter and its small boat or the HITRON helicopter crews, plays a significant part in making this mission successful.

The crew of CGC Bear are highly professional and have a strong passion for their job. Proficiency in operations, talent in the galley, and a sense of humor are some of Bear's greatest assets. Although we did not get any busts, our air crew still feels it has been a successful and rewarding patrol.



- Number of flight hours: 50 hrs
- Number of sorties: 32 surface patrols
- Number of rounds expended in 4 GUNNEX's:
 - 7.62mm: 400
 - .50 Caliber: 31

ON THE HOMEFRONT

Welcome Home!! I would like to take a moment to say how pleased we are to have our crew return safe and sound. All of us on the home front are so very proud of you. There is so much dedication that goes into making sure everything runs smoothly during the endless days of a patrol. Those of us here weathered two snow storms and a very cold January. Looking forward to February and March being utilized as a wonderful time for rest and relaxation for everyone. Once again, welcome back to all!!

-Kala Carter, Bear Ombudsman

TO SN BOWMAN: My Baby Boy, I would wait for forever but 45 days is enough! I have missed you so much! It is insane how you can make me feel so loved and appreciated even when you are gone! I have missed my pillow fight contender, car dancing partner, my snuggle buddy, my rock and my everything. I can't wait for you to be back to enjoy our time together! I loved you yesterday. I love you still. I always have and I always will! I love you to infinity and beyond!!

Love your baby girl,
Meredith aka "Rosie"

TO SN CONKEY: Hey Chris, I'm so glad you have another deployment under your belt and that you're home safely. I've missed you like crazy and have been counting down the days since you left. I'm incredibly proud of everything you've accomplished and excited to continue your journey with you and see where the Coast Guard sends us. I love you more than anything, you're my best friend and you mean the world to me. All of those lonely moments and long days will be worth it the second I'm in your arms again. I can't wait to see you! I've loved and missed you so much. See you soon baby.

Love,
Gabby

*Happy Birthday to GM1 Gladman.
We love you very much!
Laura & Avalon*

TO SN VIDAL: To my husband, my everything. Baby these 43 days have been very challenging for both me & our son. Every day was a struggle being away from you. But every email, Facebook message, & Skype from you gave us the strength & courage to keep pushing forward. AJ you are Truly our Hero & we Love you with all our heart, more than you'll ever know. These deployments make our Love for each other that much stronger & we'll love that much harder. So here we are baby after 43 days, finally we get to reunite & be with each other once again! We Love You Alberto M Vidal.

Love always,
Your wife Eugina & son Timothy.

TO MK1 CARTER: Hurry home, Daddy!! We can't wait to have you home to help us with our bicycles and build our target stand. Libby says she misses her goodnight pattern and Luke misses your explanations of everything. Momma just misses you. Bella still has a red butt. We love you so very much!!!

Luke and Libby

BEAR CUBS



Saylor Lockard turned six months old and got her first tooth. She can't wait to show her daddy!



*MK2 Rhodenhizer, we have missed you so much and are so proud of all you have accomplished on the Bear!!
Love,
Lindsey, Madeline and Lacey Reese*



Mejia Family Photos



SN Kyle & Allie Smith's daughter turned 4 months old!